

Q. What would be the comparative rate of transportation of such salted casks of geese or ducks from York Factory—say from Lake Athabasca to Lake Winnipeg? A. There is no present means of transport by which they could be moved at all to compete with food from the south. They are more wanted where they are. Food is more scarce and dear there than further south.

Q. Are you aware the Indians in that district have not been treated with—that it is only incumbent on the Government to provide food for the Indians that have been treated with? The question that the Committee desire to ask is whether these geese could be got from the Indians in that country salted and transported south at as low a cost as food from this part of the country? A. I should think not, unless some improved means of transport existed. They would cost more than pork or beef for example.

Q. What is the charge per hundred pounds made by the Hudson's Bay Company for transportation from York Factory to Winnipeg? A. I do not remember, because I have never had any occasion to pay for anything of the kind. I always had my own boats and crews travelling over that country, and never paid anything for freight.

Q. Which of the indigenous plants, can, in your opinion, be materially improved in quality, quantity and size by cultivation, grafting or budding? A. I should think the wild plums which are a very useful article of food for the Indians in the southern portion of the country could be improved by grafting or budding. It has been found that while the native trees do not grow fruit, sometimes by grafting with a larger or better variety from the south, good crops of fruit are produced.

Q. Is there any other plant besides the plum? A. Not that I have any distinct knowledge of. The saskatoon or service berry is one that gives a great deal of food to the Indians at certain seasons. It is a sugary luscious fruit, and grows to greater perfection and gives more fruit in the west than in the east. It seems to be in its home in the prairie country.

Q. Are there any means of preserving, by drying or otherwise, those fruits? A. Yes; drying is a process that could be adopted by the Indians. They can be dried and preserved in that way.

Q. The next question is "what grains, grasses, fruits, roots and vegetables will, in your opinion, yield the greatest results from the indifferent tillage which is to be expected from such bands of Indians as are new to agricultural pursuits"? A. First in regard to grains I should think barley for the food of the Indian himself would be the most appropriate in the prairie country, and in the southern parts of the wooded region the early varieties of Indian corn are found to grow. They grow as far north as Oenaburg Lake, about latitude 51 degrees, and pumpkins also become mature in the same latitude.

Q. What is the northern limit of barley cultivation? A. Barley has been cultivated in this wooded country as far north as Oxford House, latitude 55° on the boat route from Lake Winnipeg to York Factory, on Hudson's Bay.

Q. How much further north have you seen rye growing, and have you seen it growing? A. I have not seen rye growing in the North-West. Barley is the grain cultivated in the northerly portion. Barley grows all through the northern section between James' Bay on the one hand, and Lake Superior and Lake Winnipeg on the other.

Q. You mention barley as one of the grains that would be advisable to induce the Indians to cultivate? A. Yes, because they can eat it without any milling. They prepare it themselves by boiling it. They soak it in ashes and take the outer skin off and then boil it. It does not require to be ground to use, and besides it is hardy and a good crop. It would be the best grain to encourage our Indians to cultivate.

Q. Is that not also true of the early varieties of corn that you have mentioned? A. Yes, Indian corn. They treat Indian corn the same way as barley, but it does not grow by any means as far north as barley. It grows only in the southern part of the district we are speaking of. Still the region in which Indian corn will grow west of Lake Superior is of immense extent in the aggregate, and corn enough can be grown there to feed the whole Indian population.